



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
MANUAL OF SECURITY  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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## **Appendix S**

# **Bomb Threat Procedures**

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### **S.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the event of a bomb threat at a Commerce facility, access control measures should be intensified. Especially important are personnel identification, package, and property controls. All building occupants should be alert for persons who act or look suspicious. All personnel should report suspicious items or parcels. Doors to utility closets, boiler rooms, fan rooms, telephone wire closets and switchboards, and elevator machinery rooms are especially vulnerable and should be kept locked. Keys must be readily available to enter rooms during emergencies.

### **S.2 HANDLING BOMB THREATS**

**A.** Bomb threats may be received by either telephone or written message. In either case, the designated official, usually a senior facility manager, must evaluate the validity of the threat. In many instances, persons who make a bomb threat intend to disrupt operations or cause damage to property rather than cause death or injury. The decision to evacuate the threatened buildings or area and shut down utilities should be based on the evaluated validity of the bomb threat.

**B.** Another important decision is whether or not an announcement of a bomb threat should be made. Since a public announcement could conceivably result in panic among the employees, security officials may wish to consider making an announcement in a code known only to selected personnel. **NOTE:** With a fire, close all doors and windows to delay its spread; in a bomb situation, leave all doors and windows open to dissipate the explosive force.

**C.** The decision to search and/or evacuate an area must be made by the designated official or the senior facility manager. The decision should be made on following factors:

1. Available resources to react to the threat, qualified search teams and bomb dogs.
2. Operational impact, and the practicality of conducting an evacuation within the threat time frame. If a search is conducted, personnel must follow a pattern of assigned areas and report results to the incident command post immediately.



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### S.3 TELEPHONE BOMB THREATS

A. Persons likely to receive these calls (receptionists, dispatchers, guards, switchboard operators, and security personnel) should be briefed and trained in the procedures listed below.

1. Attempt to keep the caller on the line as long as possible to permit tracing and to gather information. Note: Do not hang up the phone until all attempts to trace have been initiated. **KEEP THE LINE OPEN!**

2. Record in writing the exact words of the caller. Attempt to ascertain the location of the bomb, type of device, what it looks like, and expected time of detonation.

3. Attempt to determine the sex, approximate age, the attitude of the caller, and specific reasons or motives for his or her actions in placing the bomb.

4. Note any background voices or noises that may provide a clue to the caller's location.

5. Note any accent or peculiarity of speech, which may help to identify the caller.

6. If the time permits, ask the caller questions such as "Who is calling, please?" or "What is your name?"

B. The items listed above may be placed on locally devised forms to serve as a checklist and as a means of recording (see Exhibit S-1).

### S.4 THREAT ASSESSMENT

A. The threat assessment begins with an examination of the message. Closely examine the wording. Did the message give any reason for the threat? If so, does the reason coincide with anything that involves the office or agency, e.g., RIF, disciplinary action, or policy action affecting the public?

1. Was the message detailed in describing where the bomb was placed, how it was constructed, or when it was set to detonate?

2. What was the telephone number used by the caller? Is this the general office number, a facility emergency number, a number assigned to a particular staff member, an unlisted number?



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3. Did the caller seem to have a working knowledge of the facility?

**B.** The final assessment of the threat should be made after considering and evaluating the bomb threat. There is no simple solution. The decision to search, evacuate, or take no further action, is a judgment call by the designated official.

### **S.5 EVACUATIONS**

Whether a decision is made to evacuate or not, the designated official should alert the Occupant Emergency Teams that a threat has been received. The teams should stand by in the event a decision is made to evacuate based on a building search. For detailed information regarding facility evacuation procedures, see Chapter 7, Emergency Planning and Evacuation.

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EXHIBIT 1  
**Bomb Threat Call Checklist**

Questions to Ask

Exact Wording of the Threat

When is the bomb going to explode?

\_\_\_\_\_

Where is it right now?

\_\_\_\_\_

What does it look like?

\_\_\_\_\_

What kind of bomb is it?

\_\_\_\_\_

What will trigger it?

\_\_\_\_\_

Did you place the bomb?

\_\_\_\_\_

Why?

\_\_\_\_\_

What is your name?

\_\_\_\_\_

What is your address?

\_\_\_\_\_

Sex of caller: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Race: \_\_\_\_\_ Length of call: \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

Caller's voice: (check all that apply)

Calm

Laughing

Lisping

Disguised

Angry

Crying

Raspy

Accent

Excited

Normal

Deep

Familiar

Slow

Distinct

Ragged

If familiar, who did it

Rapid

Slurred

Clearing throat

sound like?

Soft

Nasal

Deep breathing

\_\_\_\_\_

Loud

Stuttering

Cracking voice



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**Background Sounds:**

<b>Street noises</b>	<b>Motor</b>	<b>Factory</b>	<b>Telephone booth</b>
<b>House noises</b>	<b>Static</b>	<b>Music</b>	<b>Local</b>
<b>Clear</b>	<b>Voices</b>	<b>Office equipment</b>	<b>Long Distance</b>
<b>Dishes/utensils</b>	<b>PA system</b>	<b>Animal noises</b>	

**Threat Language:**

<b>Well spoken</b>	<b>Irrational</b>	<b>Taped</b>	<b>Foul</b>
<b>Incoherent</b>	<b>Read by caller</b>		

**Remarks:**

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**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Recipient's Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Office:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Room number:** \_\_\_\_\_

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